1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

capacity for work almost invariably takes the first place in a description of his character. Salesi thinks that formerly bravery was most thought of; now it is straightness (*yalo ndonu*); but people also like *manggosa*, which is combined skill and care in work.

The best way to get the people to work is to divide them into two teams and pit one against the other: the effect is miraculous; it transforms a rabble of slackers into two groups of enthusiastic workers. This spirit of rivalry is called *veinggati* or *veikati*.

Rivalry

This leads to one of the most far-reaching traits in the Fijian character. It extends not only to work, but to dancing, and anything in which it is possible to outdo others, especially munificence. A reputation for meanness (*yalondrendre*) is perhaps what a Fijian dreads most. Generosity, for which, strangely enough, there appears to be no name, is a gentlemanly trait.

The fear of getting a bad name is the foundation of Fijian ethics. A certain nobleman was said to spend all his money on his people in order to get a good name. The good name of a clan or village is as carefully upheld. If a clan fails to provide enough food for a feast it gets a bad name.

A Fijian is very sensitive to public opinion, a sensitiveness expressed by *mandua*. This word covers such emotions as shame, bashfulness, shyness, shamefacedness, prudishness, constraint, delicacy. It makes ridicule, insult or defeat hard to bear. It is especially strong in the relations of inferiors to superiors, of young to old, of nobles and elders towards one another. It makes men ashamed at a ceremonial blunder by one of their number, but it also makes them reluctant to put him right; it makes them loth to haggle, or to argue; it makes them awkward in asking for a favor; it makes them distant with their parents or elder brothers. The following is an instance to what a point they carry their sense of delicacy: I received a bill for ten shillings intended for Vola; I passed it on to him and heard nothing more about it until one day he remarked of the sender of the bill, "He knows our ways well; that is why he sent the bill to you. We agreed on five shillings as the fare, but he knew that if you saw the bill I should be ashamed to haggle, and would pay." Salesi preferred to sell his copra to a certain man because he weighed it in silence, whereas the others talked nicely to him while weighing, so that if the weights were wrong he was ashamed to protest.

They are as quick to seize upon the ridicule in others as they fear it in themselves. Number upon number of the Native Gazette contains a letter relating with great zest some blunder, as that a man pursued a shadow on

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

native officials not only for ability but also for rank, in order to prevent this shift from taking place too rapidly. The success, therefore, of the system of indirect rule in Fiji lies mainly in the wise selection of native government officials.

GOSSIP HOLDS THE WHIP

Tukutuku e rongo malua
Rongo ki Viwa thatha vakambuka.

Only whisper a thing in Viwa
And it resounds like a roaring fire.
Fijian proverb.[22]

Social life on Kambara is still regulated by an elaborate code of etiquette based on rank. We have seen that this code is learned by children while they are very young and is strictly observed even today from about the age of seven years throughout life. The social sanction behind the code is public opinion. Being "talked about" is the one thing a native cannot stand. If he is ostracized even for a short time by the group he is so overwhelmed with shame that he cannot function.

I witnessed this force at work in Tokalau. One morning our native boy, Ravu, could not work, and he sat morosely with his head in his hands. Finally he told me his trouble. In courting a young widow in the village, Ravu, who was a handsome and charming youth, had incurred the displeasure of Malakai, who had warned him several times to leave the girl alone since she was to marry one of Malakai's relatives on Komo. Ravu had not heeded the warning. The night before Malakai had threatened to incite the young men of the village, who were always jealous of a competitor, to attack Ravu in a gang and whip him with stinging stripped coconut leaves. The affair was being talked about in the village and Ravu had lost face. He was so ashamed and frightened that he could not even eat until peace had been established with Malakai and he was accepted again by the community.

[22] A. B. Brewster, *Hill Tribes of Fiji*, Philadelphia, 1922, p. 259.

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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696 554 term has not the stigma attached to it one might expect, however. For instance, Malakai of Tokalau was the village schoolmaster and had an acceptable standing in the community in spite of the fact that he had served a jail term for having stolen money while holding the position of *mbuli Kambara.*

691 626 Practically all court cases in Lau involving natives are handled by the district and provincial courts for natives only. Native district courts are held in preparation for the native provincial circuit court which sits on each island every two or three years. Most of the cases are either truancy or theft. There is a reluctance, however, on the part of the natives to submit cases to the government courts. Public opinion works two ways. It not only serves as a powerful force to prevent breaches of the social code, but it prevents many petty offenses from reaching the courtroom. In southern Lau there is a tendency to settle as many cases as possible out of court. This is possible only because of the strong sense of clan and communal loyalty. A man tries to protect his relatives, especially the members of his clan. This is illustrated by the following case.

691 673 602 One day Ketei, the industrious village headman of Tokalau, came to us with an earnest face. Twenty baskets of sweet potatoes had been taken without permission from his garden in the last three days. This represented the loss of about ten days' food supply for his family. Ketei said he would not have minded the loss, if the person who took them had only asked his permission. We asked if he knew who had taken them. He said he did not. He would not confide even his suspicions to us, but the gossip of the village was that Ramoko of Undu, Ketei's brother-in-law, had taken the sweet potatoes. Ramoko was known as the laziest man in Undu. At the slightest excuse, such as the new year's celebration (introduced in recent times), he moved with his wife and three children to live for two or three weeks with Ketei, his industrious brother-in-law, who always had plenty to eat as a result of hard and persistent